

REMARKS

In an Office Action mailed on June 10, 2004, objections were made to claims 8, 24 and 25; and claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over alleged Applicants Admitted Prior Art (herein called "AAPA") in view of Suzuki. Claims 8, 24 and 25 have been amended to overcome the corresponding objections to these claims. Newly added claims 27-32 are patentable over the cited art. The § 103 rejections are addressed below.

§ 103 Rejections of Claims 1-10:

As amended, the method of independent claim 1 is usable with a computer and includes in response to the computer being in a predetermined sleep state, coupling a load to conduct current from a supply voltage plane of the computer to ground to prevent a back-driven voltage on the supply voltage plane.

Contrary to the limitations of amended independent claim 1, Suzuki teaches various circuits to minimize a residual voltage on an output terminal when the output terminal is disconnected from a power source. More specifically, Suzuki discloses in the background and in its detailed description portions various switch circuits, each of which couples a 100 kilohm resistor between the output terminal and ground when the main power source is disconnected from the output terminal. The primary function of this resistor in Suzuki is to reduce the residual voltage appearing on the output terminal (due to capacitance) after the disconnection so that should the computer be turned back on, the residual voltage will not effect operation. As disclosed in Suzuki, the circuit decreases the voltage at the output terminal to about 0.4 volts in about two seconds, a time described in Suzuki as being "sufficiently short to prevent the occurrence of the operational error due to the residual voltage at the reactivation of the switch circuit." Suzuki, 4:27-30.

Suzuki does not, however, teach a circuit to prevent a back-driven voltage. More specifically, as set forth in the various embodiments in the present application, a circuit to prevent a back-driven voltage (such as the exemplary embodiments that are described in the specification) establishes a much lower resistance path between the supply voltage plane and ground. Thus, the 100 kΩ resistor arrangement disclosed in Suzuki, although sufficient for the function described in Suzuki, would not prevent a back-driven voltage when no power is provided to the output terminal. As such, a combination of Suzuki and the AAPA fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of independent claim 1.

Claims 2-10 are patentable for at least the reason that these claims depend from an allowable claim.

§ 103 Rejections of Claims 11-26:

As amended, the computer of independent claim 11 and the system of independent claim 19 each includes a circuit to in response to a computer being in a predetermined sleep state, couple a load to conduct current from a supply voltage plane of the computer to ground to prevent a back-driven voltage on the supply voltage plane.

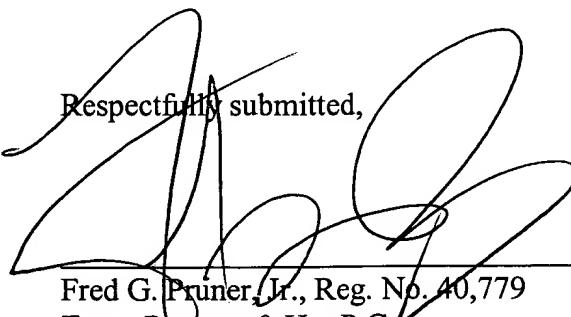
See discussion of independent claim 1 above. In particular, neither the AAPA nor Suzuki teaches or suggests a circuit to couple a load to conduct current from a supply voltage plane to ground to prevent a back-driven voltage. In this regard, the 100 kΩ resistor disclosed in Suzuki would not prevent a back-driven voltage. Thus, for at least this reason, independent claims 11 and 19 overcome the § 103(a) rejections, as the combination of Suzuki and the AAPA fails to teach or suggest all claim limitations.

Claims 12-18 and 20-26 are patentable for at least the reason that these claims depend from an allowable claim.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the § 103 rejections and a favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance are requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (ITL.0577US).

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Respectfully submitted,

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